

ADVANCEMENT

Nona would recall
in gratitude that
things had been much
worse
when they first married
Now Ray Bob worked
for minimum wage
at the cottonseed mill
tickled red-faced
to be coming up in the world

DAY BEFORE GRAFFITTI WEEK OPENED

Herb watches the traffic
pouring into Modesto
Good for business, he says
Every motel room in town
has been booked for months

His eyes moisten as he recalls
I had a customized 1950 Ford
with a lowered front
loud tail pipes and fancy hubcaps

I used to cruise the streets
make the loop
meet the girls
go on to Burgess Drive-In
have deep-dish berry pie, ice cream
burgers

Can't really believe I'm forty-eight
and got three grown children
and one grandchild